

PR 3991

.A1 K4

Copy 1

KENILWORTH :

A Melo-Drama,

IN TWO ACTS.

(FOUNDED ON THE NOVEL OF THAT NAME.)



AS PERFORMED AT

The Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden,

Thursday, March 8th, 1821.

London :

PRINTED FOR JOHN LOWNDES,
36, BOW-STREET.

(*Price Two Shillings.*)

c 1821 ?

PR 3991
A1 K4

305170
22

ADVERTISEMENT.



It may be necessary to state, both by way of apology to the distinguished author of the novel, and for the satisfaction of those who have witnessed its representation, that the Drama of KENILWORTH has been produced in Two Acts, in consequence of other plays on the subject of greater length, that were submitted to the Proprietors of Covent-Garden Theatre, having been deemed somewhat heavy, and unconnected, in their general interest.

The piece herewith submitted to public opinion, was compiled in the space of as many days as there are acts in it: and the success it enjoys is solely to be attributed to the unrivalled reputation of the novel in question, and to the great talents of the different performers engaged in its representation.

It may not be invidious to remark, that Mr. FARLEY's assiduity and abilities, in arranging the performance of the piece, are entitled to the highest encomiums and acknowledgments of

THE COMPILER.

London, 12th March, 1821.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.



<i>Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester</i>	Mr. Vandenhoff.
<i>Varney</i>	Mr. Abbott.
<i>Lord Hunsdon</i>	Mr. Norris.
<i>Earl of Sussex</i>	Mr. George.
<i>Lord Burleigh</i>	Mr. Crumpton.
<i>Sir Walter Raleigh</i>	Mr. Johnson.
<i>Tresilian</i>	Mr. Connor.
<i>Michael Lambourne</i>	Mr. Comer.
<i>Antony Foster</i>	Mr. Farley.
<i>Giles Gosling</i>	Mr. Barnes.
<i>Goldthread</i>	Mr. Heath.
<i>Queen Elizabeth</i>	Mrs. Faucit.
<i>Countess of Leicester</i>	Mrs. Vining.
<i>Janet</i>	Mrs. T. Hill.

Opening Glee in the First Act.

GLEE.

Of all the birds on bush or tree,
Commend me to the owl,
Since he may best ensample be
To those the cup that trowl.
For when the sun hath left the West,
He chuses the tree that he loves the best;
And he whoops at his song, and he laughs at his jest:
Then though hours be late, and weather foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.

The lark is but a bu pkin fowl,
He sleeps in his nest till morn;
But my blessing upon the jolly owl,
Who all night blows his horn.
Then up with your cup till you stagger in speech,
And match me this catch, tho' you swagger and screech,
And drink till you wink, my merry men each;
For though hours be late, and weather foul,
We'll drink to the health of the bonny, bonny owl.

Finale in First Act.

“Pierce the air with sounds of joy,
Never more let care annoy.”

KENILWORTH.



ACT I.

SCENE I.

Interior of an Inn.

Enter GILES GOSLING, MICHAEL LAMBOURNE, GOLD-THREAD, and others, followed by TRESILIAN, who retires a little behind the rest.

MICH. WHY, uncle, Giles Gosling, what a precious bead-roll you have read me, on my return home, of all my comrades:---and so Swashing Will of Wallingford has bid us good night; and, then, what's become of Prance of Padworth?

GILES. Pranced off; made immortal ten years since,

MICH. Nay, after these baulks, I need hardly enquire after Tony Foster.

GILES. What Tony Foster mean ye?

MICH. Why, he they called Tony Fire-the-Faggot?

GILES. Tony Foster lives and thrives; but, kinsman, I would not have you call him Tony Fire-the-Faggot, if you would not brook the stab.

MICH. How! is he grown ashamed on't? and hath he prospered since, and doth that prosperity keep him out of the way of those whose exchequers lie in other men's pockets?

GOLD. Prospered, quotha! --- Why, you remember Cunnor Place?

MICH. Ay, Master Goldthread, by the same token I robbed its orchard three times;---What of that?

GILES. Well, there Antony Foster now dwells, as grand as if he were himself a belted knight. Nor is it altogether pride in Tony: there is a fair lady in the case, and he will scarce let the light of day fall on her. So it is thought he means to wed this stranger, that men keep such a coil about.

TRES. (*Advancing*) And why so? I mean, why do they keep such a coil about her?

GILES. Why, I wot not, Master Tresilian, except that men say she is as beautiful as an angel; and no one knows whence she comes, or why she is so closely mewed up: For my part, I never saw her.

MICH. What, lived within bow-shot, and never had either curiosity or courage to see her?

GOLD. Why, thou bully, Mike, yonder is the enchanted tower, and the dragon, and the lady, all at thy service, if thou darest venture on them.

MICH. Why, thou bale of sarsnet, so I would, for a quartern of sack;---or, wilt thou bet me a piece of brown Hollands, against these five angels, (*shewing money*) that I do not go up to Cumnor Hall, and force Tony Foster to introduce me to his fair guest?

GOLD. I will.

TRES. I would gladly pay your halves to be permitted to accompany you.

MICH. In what would it advantage you?

TRES. In nothing, sir, unless to mark the skill and valour with which you conduct yourself. I am a traveller, which will at once account for my being in this inn, and one who seeks for strange rencontres, and uncommon passages.

MICH. Nay, if it pleasures you to see a trout tickled, I care not how many witness the sport. So, let us in, and take another cup; and, then, for my friend, Tony, and Cumnor Place.

[*Exeunt, all but Tresilian and Giles.*]

TRES. My good host, I pray you, lend me some of your counsel. Who, or what, is this Foster, and why makes he such mystery of his female inmate?

GILES. Troth, I can add but little to what you have just heard, only that he *was poor*, and is *now rich*. I forewarn thee, my guest, not to go near him.

TRES. Why, mine host, thy counsel shall not be cast away; but I must uphold my share in this wager. Dost know him, good host?

GILES. No, thank Heaven! and don't wish to: he never does any thing but for money. I think it likely my kinsman and he will quarrel, if Mike thrust his acquaintance on him; and I am sorry that you, my worthy Master Tresilian, will still think of going to Cumnor, in my nephew's company.

TRES. I have no fear on my account: be assured, I shall proceed with caution.

GILES. Well, only bear in mind, my worthy guest, that Tony is quite unlike you and me; he never does any thing, but in the hopes of bettering himself,—as the old woman said, when she threw herself over Kingston bridge.

MICH. (*Without*) What ho! Master Tresilian! we wait ye.

GILES. Lambourne calls.

TRES. I come, I come:—now, then, for Cumnor.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The exterior of Cumnor Place, large Door in Flats, thickly shaded with Wood.

Enter MICHAEL LAMBOURNE, *followed by* TRESILIAN.

MICH. This wood is as dark as a wolf's mouth! but, come on, and, with stout hearts, we need not fear any thing. Well, here we are, at the gate of Cumnor; and I have seen many a less strong one, in a county jail. (*Knocks.*) (*Music.—Knocks again.*)

(*Within*) What mean ye?

MICH. To speak with Master Foster, instantly, on pressing business of the State.

TRES. Methinks you will find it difficult to make that good.

MICH. Tush, man! no soldier would go on, were he always to consider when and how he should come off. Let us once obtain entrance, and all will go well enough. (*Music.*)

(*The door opens, Michael and Tresilian enter, when the door is tolled after them.*)

SCENE III.

A Chamber in Cumnor.

*Within a Door in the Flats, and a Side Door at the Wing,
through which*

Enter MICHAEL and TRESILIAN, preceded by a Servant,

Who bolts and locks the Door they came in by, and then goes off.

MICH. Well, I must say, good Fire-the-Faggot, that were it not for one's valour's sake, and Master Goldthread's piece of Hollands, I would rather be swilling the claret with Giles Gosling, than here; but, however, Master Tresilian, here we are, and must e'en make the best on't.

ANT. (*Without*) Strangers, say you, enquiring for me?---

MICH. That's 'Tony, sure enough.

ANT. And where are these importunate visitors?---

Enter ANTONY FOSTER.

Let me pray you, gentlemen, to tell me the cause of this visit?

MICH. Ha! (*shaking his hand*) my dear friend and ingle, Tony Foster, how fares it with you for many a long year? What, have you altogether forgotten your friend, gossip, and playfellow, Mike Lambourne?

ANT. Mike Lambourne! and are you Mike Lambourne?

MICH. Aye, as sure as you are Antony Foster.

ANT. 'Tis well:---And what may Mike Lambourne expect, from his visit here?

MICH. Why, a damned deal better treatment than I'm likely to get, I think.

ANT. Why, thou gallows-bird! thou jail-bird! thou friend to the hangman, and his customers! hast thou the assurance to expect countenance from any one whose neck is beyond the compass of a Tyburn tippet?

MICH. It may be with me as thou sayest; still am I good enough society for mine ancient friend, Antony Fire-the-Faggot, though he be, for the present, by some indescribable title, the master of Cumnor Place.

ANT. Hark ye, Mike Lambourne, ye are a gambler now, and live by the counting of chances: Compute me the odds, that I do not, on the instant, throw you out of the window, into the ditch, there.

MICH. Twenty to one, that you do not.

ANT. And wherefore, I pray you?

MICH. Because you dare not, for your life, lay a finger on me. I am younger, and stronger, than you, and have a double portion of the fighting devil in me.

ANT. Well, be not wroth with me, good Mike; I did but try whether thou had'st parted with aught of thine old and honourable frankness: But, who is this gallant, honest Mike?---Is he a Corinthian---a cutter, like thyself?

MICH. I pray, know Master Tresilian, and honour him; for he is a gentleman, and hath many admirable qualities, tho' not of our class.

ANT. Then, I will pray you, accompany me in another room, honest Mike; for, what I have to say to thee is for thy private ear. Meanwhile, I pray you, sir, to abide us in this apartment, and do not leave it;---there be those in this house, who would be alarmed at the sight of a stranger.

TRES. I shall remember your injunctions, sir.

[Exeunt Antony, Lambourne, and Foster.]

These are the associates, Amy, to which thy cruel levity, thine unthinking and most unmerited falsehood, has condemned me! but, I will not leave the pursuit of thee, once the object of my purest, and most devoted affections; though, to me, thou can'st, henceforth, be nothing but a thing to weep over. I will save thee from thy betrayer, and from thyself. I will restore thee to thy parents, and reconcile thee to Heaven. I cannot bid the bright star again sparkle in the sphere from which it has shot, but-----what noise is that!

(The door in the Flat opens, and

Enter AMY.)

(Tresilian conceals his face in his cloak.)

AMY. *(Advancing, playfully, to Tresilian)* Nay, my sweet friend, Janet, after I have waited for you so long, you come not to my bower to play the masquer; you are arraigned of treason to true love and fond affection, and you must stand up at the bar, and answer it with

full face, and uncovered. How say you---Guilty, or Not Guilty? (*pulling the cloak off his face.*)

TRES. Alas! Amy!

AMY. Almighty Powers! Tresilian!

TRES. It is Tresilian: yet, Amy, fear me not.

AMY. Why should I fear you, Tresilian, or, wherefore have you intruded yourself into my dwelling, uninvited, sir, and unwished for?

TRES. Your dwelling! Amy? Alas! is a prison your dwelling?---a prison, guarded by one of the most sordid of men?

AMY. This house is mine, mine while I chuse to inhabit it. It is my pleasure to live in seclusion; who shall gainsay it?

TRES. Your father, madam; your broken-hearted father, Sir Hugh Robsart, who sent me in quest of you, with that authority which he cannot exert in person.---Here is his letter, (*giving letter*) written while he blessed his pain of body, which somewhat stunned his agony of mind.

AMY. (*Taking, and opening letter*) The pain!---Is my father, then, ill?

TRES. So ill, that even your utmost haste may hardly restore him to health.

AMY. Tresilian, I cannot, dare not, leave this place: Go back to my father, tell him I will obtain permission to see him, within twelve hours from hence.

TRES. Permission!---permission to visit your father, on his sick bed---perhaps, on his death bed! and permission from whom?---from the villain who, under the disguise of friendship, abused every duty of hospitality, and stole thee from thy father's roof!---But, tell me one thing, that I may be, at least, one ray of comfort to thy father,---Does he claim a husband's right to controul your motions?

AMY. Stop thy base, unmanner'd tongue! To no question that derogates from mine honour, do I deign an answer.

TRES. You have said enough, in refusing to reply. With thy will, thine uninfluenced, free, and natural will, thou could'st not chuse this state of slavery and dishonour. Thou art bound by some spell, entrapped by some art, and---but, thus, I break the charm. (*In an authoritative, firm tone*) Amy, in the name of thine

excellent, thy broken-hearted father, I command thee to follow me.

(As he is about to grasp her arms, she utters a loud scream.)

Enter ANTONY FOSTER, and MICHAEL LAMBOURNE.

(Tresilian partly draws his sword.)

ANT. Fire and faggots! what have we here? Madam, what makes ye here, out of bounds? Retire---retire! there's life and death in this matter. And you, friend, whoever you may be, leave this house---out with you!---before my dagger's hilt and your costard become acquainted.---Draw, Mike, and rid us of the knave!

MICH. Not I, on my soul, Master Fire-the-Faggot.

ANT. *(Very firmly, aside, to Mich.)* Hark ye, friend Mike---forget that name, and the passage which relates to it, if you would not have our newly-revived comradeship die a sudden and violent death. I can, and will, prefer thee to the service of my patron. Now, as you know me firm, do as I bid ye, and remember, 'tis Antony Foster that is now speaking to thee.

(Returns to Amy.)

MICH. Well, well: *(crossing to Tresilian)* Hark ye, my Cornish comrade! make yourself scarce,---depart, ---vanish!

TRES. Away! base groom! And you, madam, fare you well;---what life is left in your father's bosom, will depart, at the news I have to tell him.

[Exit Tresilian.]

AMY. *(Faintly)* Tresilian, be not rash; say no scandal of me.

ANT. *(Crossing Amy to see Tresilian out, then turns to her, and says)* Here is proper gear! and, I pray ye, go to your chamber, lady, and let us consider how this is to be answered.

AMY. *(Haughtily)* I move not at your command, sir.

ANT. Why, but you must, fair lady;---excuse my freedom---but this is no time to strain courtesies,---you must go to your chamber. Mike, follow that meddling coxcomb, and, as you desire to thrive, see him clearly off the premises, while I bring this headstrong lady to reason:---Draw, man, and after him.

MICH. I'll follow him, and see him fairly out of Flanders; but, for hurting a man I have drank my morning's draught withal, 'tis clear against my conscience.

[Exit.]

ANT. And now, madam, I must needs urge your retiring to your own chamber. If the knowledge of this mischance should reach my master's ear, it would go hard with Antony Foster's honour. Retire, I pray you.

AMY. Back ! slave ! and touch not even my garment, lest it should go harder with thy head than thy honour.

ANT. Nay, lady, use what terms you please, it cannot prevent my knowing my duty. I wish not to use violence ; I, therefore, do beseech you, lady !---Nay, if that will not do, I do compel---

(A whistle is heard from without.

Aye, we are fairly sped, now ! Yonder is thy lord's signal ; and what to say about the disorder that has happened in the household, I know not.

AY. It is Leicester !---it is my noble earl !---it is my Dudley !---His often-heard and well-known whistle sounds, to me, like a note of lordly music.

ANT. Madam,---

AMY. Now, sir, make way for your master :---Ah ! Amy, now shines thy happy star : Oh, let me rush into his dear, fond arms !---My lord---my dear, dear lord ! *(rushing past Foster :---with disappointed feeling)* Pooh ! 'tis only Richard Varney !

Enter VARNEY.

VAR. Ay, madam, 'tis but Richard Varney ; but, even the first grey cloud should be acceptable, because it is the messenger of the blessed sun.

AMY. How ! comes my lord hither to-night ?

VAR. Nay, lady, my commission goes not so far as that ; but, I bear important news from my lord, which befits alone your private ear.

AMY. Come, then, to my own apartment, with thine utmost dispatch.

VAR. I will but break words with Master Foster, here, madam, and follow you on the instant.

[Exit Countess, through Door in Flat.

---Answer me, thou paltering knave, how came Tresilian to be at the postern-door ?

ANT. Tresilian ! what know I of Tresilian ? I never heard his name.

VAR. Why, villain, it was the very Cornish chough, to whom old Sir Hugh Robsart destined his pretty Amy.

Luckily, he knows nothing of my lord, but thinks he has only me to deal with.---But how, in the fiend's name, came he hither?

ANT. Why, with Mike Lambourne, an' you must know, a fellow thou didst charge me to seek out for thee, who has a good sword, and an unscrupulous conscience.

VAR. And did he bring the saint-like, sighing Tresilian, in his hand?

ANT. They came together, by heaven! and Tresilian, to speak heaven's truth, obtained a moment's interview with our pretty moppet, while I was talking apart with Lambourne.

VAR. Improvident villain! we are both undone!

ANT. No fear of that. She is in no mood to stoop to his lure. She yelled out, on seeing him, as if an adder had stung her.

VAR. That is good: but there is, now, another game on the wing. At the Queen's late court, I was summoned before her majesty, on information she had received, to account to her for this Mistress Amy Robsart.

ANT. And what chanced therefrom?

VAR. I told the Queen she was my wife, and her majesty, in her capricious mood, has commanded me to bring her to Kenilworth, whither the court is now journeying; and, as you know, my lord's marriage cannot be disclosed, or all hopes of his ever becoming King of England are lost, (and if he is lost, why, you and I are no better,) we must e'en persuade her to go there, as simple Mrs. Varney.

ANT. To judge by the frosty reception she gave you, that will be no easy matter.

VAR. Why, then, if she obstinately refuse, other means must be resorted to---which, I think, Master Foster, you and I may readily give birth to.

ANT. You keep a stout heart, master; for me, if I did not hope to live many years, and have time for the great work of repentance, I would not go forward with you.

VAR. Oh, thou shalt live long enough, never fear;---but go, prepare for us a cup of thy best wine. I must visit this mavis, unruffled in aspect, and gay in temper. But, first resign your trust, and let me have the master-key in my possession, while I remain in Cumnor.

[Exit Foster.]

'Tis true that this base churl hath fathomed my fear. Amy loves not me---I would it were as true that I loved not her. But she must not leave, until I am assured on what terms we are to stand. My lord's interest, and so far it is mine, demands concealment of his marriage with the countess, or never will he ascend the throne of England. Thy ambition, my Lord Leicester, shall be goaded by mine. You must climb the hill, my lord, and you must drag Richard Varney up with you! In *her*, too, I must work an interest; and who knows but I may yet reap the sweetest and best revenge, for her former scorn of me? I come to thee, fair countess,---now for a close heart, and an open and unruffled brow. [*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.

Another Apartment in Cumnor.

*Trap on the Stage to Work, at 1st Wing---Very strong Door---
Centre Door in Flat.*

The COUNTESS and JANET discovered.

AMY. Methinks, Master Varney is somewhat delaying his errand; go, good Janet, and call him.

JAN. I will, dear lady---Oh! Master Varney is here, madam.

Enter VARNEY.

AMY. Now, good Master Varney, we are waiting anxiously the news from my lord.

VAR. Madam, we are not alone, and my lord's message was for your ear only.

AMY. Leave us, Janet; but remain with your father in the next apartment, and within call.

[*Exit Janet.*]

VAR. My lord regrets that he cannot repair to Cumnor, for the reason, that the Queen is now on her journey, to pay the long-talked-of visit to his castle of Kenilworth.

AMY. Indeed! and brought you no letter from my lord, intimating this to me?

VAR. My noble master's situation at court will prevent your ladyship visiting Kenilworth, as the Countess of Leicester, and a circumstance has occurred, to render it still more impracticable.

AMY. And what is that, sir?

VAR. Your ladyship must know what the world in general believe of your situation.

AMY. What may it be, sir?

VAR. They say, you left your father's house---but I shall offend you, if I go on.

AMY. Nay, go on; I must learn to endure the evil report, which my folly has brought on me:---I am accounted, I suppose, the paramour of Leicester?

VAR. Men say---other names; and such report hath reached the Queen. From the share I had in uniting you with my lord, they impute, even to me, feelings I could never entertain. Such, even in open Court, the Queen accused me of; and has ordered that your ladyship, on such account, meet her, forthwith, at Kenilworth:---but my lord's letter will explain all.

AMY. (*Taking the letter; reads.*) "Conjure---reasons---honor---life---bear, at Kenilworth---name---Varney!"

(*As she reads, she gradually works her countenance into violent passion, and then rushes towards the door, between which and her Varney interposes, expostulating.*

(*Vehemently*) Stand from the door, sir, I command you! I will have no other reply. What ho! without, there! Janet! alarm the house!--Foster! break open the door!--I am detained here by a traitor!--Use axe and lever, Master Foster! I will be your warrant.

(*Janet and Foster rush into the room, through door; Janet runs up to Amy, and Foster to Varney.*

JAN. In the truth's name, what ails your ladyship?

ANT. What, in the name of Satan, have you done to her?

VAR. Who, I?---Nothing;---nothing, but communicate to her her lord's commands, which, if the lady list not to obey, she knows better how to answer to it, than I may pretend to.

AMY. Now, by heavens! Janet, the false traitor lies in his throat; he must needs lie, for he speaks to the dishonour of my noble lord! He must needs lie doubly, for he speaks to gain ends of his own, equally execrable as unattainable.

VAR. You have misapprehended me, lady ; let this matter rest, till your passion be abated, and I will explain all.

AMY. Thou shalt never have an opportunity of doing so. Look at him, Janet ! he is fairly drest, hath the outside of a gentleman, and hither he came, to persuade me it was my lord's pleasure---nay, more, my wedded lord's commands, that I should go with him to Kenilworth, and, before the Queen and nobles, and in the presence of my own wedded lord, that I should acknowledge him---*him*, there, my lord's lacquey---for my liege lord and husband.

VAR. You hear her, Foster ; and you, young maiden, hear this lady. You hear that her warmth only objects to me the course which our good lord, for the purpose to keep certain matters secret, suggests, in the very letter which she holds in her hand.

ANT. Nay, lady, I must needs say, you are hasty in this ; such deceit is not utterly to be condemned, when practised for a good end.

AMY. Now, so Heaven pardon my useless anger, thou art as daring a hypocrite, as this fellow is an impudent deceiver ! Never will I believe that the noble Dudley gave countenance to so dastardly, to so dishonourable a plan.---Thus, (*tearing the letter to pieces*,) thus, I tread on his infamy---if his, indeed, it be---and thus destroy its remembrance for ever !

VAR. Madam, I entreat you to believe yourself mistaken ?

AMY. As soon will I believe light darkness ! Go ;---begone, sir ;---I scorn thee so much, that I am ashamed to have been angry with thee. Janet, my lips are parched ; I need refreshment, for my spirit is well nigh exhausted.

VAR. Ah !

JAN. Dear lady, rest on me awhile ; and do you, father, do my lady's bidding.

VAR. Come hither, Foster ? (*aside*) Go to my private chamber, and wait me there. Sir, do your lady's bidding. (*Aside*) She may have wine ; and, mark ! a drug or two won't spoil its relish.---Begone !

[*Exit Foster.*]

We'll try this draught ; it may remove all difficulties ; and, though it fail, escape she cannot. She never leaves these walls alive, unless as---Mistress Varney.

[*Exit, after Foster.*]

AMY. The villain! the cold-blooded villain! And is it possible, Leicester, thou could'st bid *me*, for one moment, deny my wedded right in thee, or thyself yield it to another? But it is impossible! the villain has lied in all. Janet, I will not remain here longer;---I will escape from Cumnor!

JAN. Alas, madam, whither would you fly?

AMY. I know not, Janet, but I am sure the Heaven I serve will not abandon me in this crisis, for I am in the hands of wicked men.

JAN. Do not think so, dear lady! my father is stern, and strict in his temper, and severely true to his duty and trust; but yet---

Re-enter FOSTER, with Salver.

ANT. (*Faltering, and trembling a little*) I come to offer to your ladyship refreshment, after your late alarm.

JAN. (*Going up firmly to her father, and taking the salver from his hand,*) Father, I will fill for my noble mistress, when such is her pleasure.

ANT. Thou, my child!--no, my child, it is not thou shalt render the lady this service.

JAN. And why, I pray you, if it be fitting that the noble lady should partake of the cup at all?

ANT. Why,---why,---(*hesitating, and then bursting into passion*) Why, because it is my pleasure, minion, that you should not!--Get thee gone to the evening lecture!

JAN. Now, as I hope to hear lecture again, I will not go thither this night, unless I am better assured of my mistress's safety. Give me that cup, father?

(*Takes the cup.*)

And now, father, that which shall benefit my mistress, cannot do me prejudice: Father, I drink to you.

(*Antony, rushing to his daughter; and snatching the goblet from her hand, stands, in a state of wild irresolution, glaring on her.*)

---This is strange, my father! Will you not let me serve my lady, nor drink to her myself?

ANT. (*Incoherently*) I will not.

JAN. Good Heavens! my mind misgives me! And can it be?---can mine own father seek the life of this sweet lady? Fear nothing, father; speak to me: What is thy horrid purpose?---Speak; speak, I say!

ANT. Speak not to me---I am wild!--my brain is giddy!--my heart is bursting!--This breast, though fraught with guilt, can still admit remorse. Hence, to the devil who brewed thee! (*throwing away the cup.*) Touch it not! 'tis venomous!--'tis poi---Oh, maddened wretch! (*striking his forehead*) 'tis poi---oi---son!

(*Rushing wildly out.*)

AMY. Good Heavens! it comes upon me---they seek my life! Oh, Janet---but tears are vain; I will fly this place.

JAN. Oh, madam, whither?

AMY. To Kenilworth: I will see Leicester; he cannot know my usage. Oh, Leicester, thine own true wife, thy Amy, is at the mercy of thy meanest servants. I will fly hence. (*Falling at Janet's feet*) As thou didst ever love me, as thou art thyself a woman, aid thy distressed mistress!--Tell me, I beseech thee, is there the possibility of escape?---Is there no secret way?---Do not you desert me!

JAN. Desert you, madam! may the hope of my trust desert me if I do! There is a way of escape.

AMY. What escape, Janet?---Can I be so happy?

JAN. Are you strong enough to make the effort?

AMY. I am equal to any effort that may relieve me from this place.

JAN. (*Looking cautiously round, then pointing to a trap*) In this chamber there is a trap, leading through the numerous vaults of the Castle, to a postern-gate, which looks on the river; it opens by a spring.---Gently, madam.---

(*She goes to the trap, and touches the spring.*)

And now, lady, it will need all our strength, to lift up the door.

(*They open the trap-door, and are about to descend, when Varney is heard to call "Foster!"*)

JAN. Good Heavens! here is Varney coming!

AMY. We are lost!

JAN. Stay, lady, leave it to me. Do you step into yonder recess, and I will wait here to receive Varney.

(*Amy retires, as*

VARNEY enters, softly.

VAR. I wonder if she has drank it. Janet, where is

your father? (*Looking round*) Where is the Countess?

(*Sees the trap.*

What trap is this?---How came it open?

JAN. That trap, sir---yes, sir---that trap---I was just coming to tell you,---my duty, and my father bid me tell you, that---that---the Countess has escaped down that trap!---

(*The Countess is listening.*

VAR. Escaped! What's to be done? She must be pursued.---Here, Janet, take these keys, give them to Foster; they open that door which leads out of the Castle---Alarm the house! seek out thy father!---Meantime, I myself will follow---hasten, to secure her!

(*Varney runs down the trap, when Janet beckons on the Countess.*

JAN. Now, madam, we must be bold.

(*They both shut down the trap. Janet then shews the Countess the keys, given to her by Varney. They go to the door, open it, and* [Exeunt.

SCENE V.

A Wood.

Enter JANET, supporting AMY.

JAN. Have courage, madam, lean on me; if we can but reach the inn, kept by one Giles Gosling, before we are pursued, he will protect us, and furnish us with a guide and conveyance to Kenilworth. Cheer ye, madam!

AMY. Oh, Janet! for what are we reserved? But I will not despond; the hope of again meeting my loved lord, my Leicester---that shall support my spirits:---my miseries must be at an end, when once at Kenilworth.

JAN. Speed us, then, madam, or we shall be lost. Let us avoid the public road, and cross this forest, to

delude pursuit; for if Varney should alarm the house, and my father release him, I fear we should be both undone.

AMY. Ay, true; on, then!---the very name of Varney gives me strength, almost beyond my sex.

[*Ereunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Kenilworth Castle.

(*Flourish and Shouts.*) Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH,
LEICESTER, &c.

LEIC. (*Kneeling*) Thus low and grateful will your servant bend, and bless the moment that beheld your gracious majesty in his own domains. With your majesty's permission, we will proceed?

ELIZ. Be it so, my lord. We are, in effect, something fatigued with a journey, which the concourse of our good people hath rendered it so; though the love they have shewn our person, hath, at the same time, made it delightful.

LEIC. On, then!

(*Glee and Chorus, as the procession moves.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Gardens of Kenilworth.

*At one side of the Stage, a Picturesque Grotto.—Music.—
Moonlight.*

Enter AMY.

AMY. AT length, I am in Kenilworth, and if I could but see my guide, I should learn if he had delivered my letter to Leicester. I am still in alarm, for, even now, I was assailed in the chamber to which I first resorted, and where I met Tresilian. I will not again enter into an enclosed apartment:---here is a grotto; in this will I wait and watch; here I may see all that passes, and yet be myself unseen.

(She retires into the grotto.—Music.)

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and LEICESTER.

ELIZ. No, Dudley, no; I must be the mother of my people: other ties, that make the lowly maiden happy, are denied to her sovereign. No, Leicester, urge it no more: Were I, as others, free to seek my own happiness, then, indeed,---but it cannot, cannot be. Delay the chace till morning's dawn; delay it, I pray ye, and leave me, my lord.

LEIC. How! leave you, madam! has my madness offended you?

ELIZ. No, Leicester, not so; but *it is* madness, and must not be repeated.---Go; but go not out of call, and, meantime, let no one intrude on my privacy.

[Exit Leicester.]

Were it possible, were it *but* possible;---yet, no, no---Elizabeth must be the wife and mother of England alone.---I hear a noise---(*seeing Amy*)---Ha! what may this be? is it a statue, or is it life itself? (*Advances a*

little) How now, fair nymph of this lovely grotto,---art thou spell-bound? Speak, we command thee!

(As Amy falls at her feet.

What may this mean? Stand up, damsel---what would'st thou have with us?

AMY. Your protection, madam.

ELIZ. All my subjects shall have it, while they are worthy of it:---In what do you crave my protection?

AMY. I request, I implore, I beseech your gracious protection, against one Varney!

ELIZ. What, Varney, the servant of Lord Leicester? What, damsel, are you to him, or he to you?

AMY. I---I---was his prisoner, and he practised on my life, and I broke forth, to---to---

ELIZ. To throw thyself on my protection;---thou shalt have it---that is, if thou art worthy. Thou art Amy, daughter of Sir Hugh Robsart, of Lidcote Hall?

AMY. Forgive me! Forgive me!

ELIZ. Forgive thee!---for what should I forgive thee, silly wench?---for being the daughter of thy own father? Thou art brain-sick, surely,---But thou art married to this same Varney?

AMY. No, madam, no; I am not the wife of Varney---I would rather be the bride of destruction.

ELIZ. Gad's mercy! thou canst talk fast enough, when thou chusest. Tell me, then, woman,---whos wife, or paramour, art thou?---Thou wert better dally with a lion, than with Elizabeth.

AMY. The Earl of Leicester knows it all.

ELIZ. The Earl of Leicester! Woman, thou dost belie him.

Enter LEICESTER, and Lords.

LEIC. My gracious Queen, I've given orders---

ELIZ. Oh! you are come in right good time, my lord;---Know you this woman?

(Amy advances; Leicester stands petrified.

Leicester, could I think that thou hast practised on me, that head of thine were in as great a peril as ever was thy father's.

LEIC. My head cannot fall, but by the sentence of my peers; to them I will plead, and not to a princess, who thus requites my faithful services.

ELIZ. What! My lords, we are defied, I think?

AMY. (*Falling down at the feet of Eliz.*) He is guiltless, madam; no one can lay ought to the charge of the noble Leicester.

ELIZ. Why, minion, did'st not thou thyself say, that the Earl of Leicester was privy to thy whole history?

LEIC. (*Aside*) I will explain all to the Queen, rather than injure, any longer, such innocence and beauty.--- Permit me, madam---

Enter VARNEY, in great haste.

VAR. (*Falling down, on one knee*) Pardon, my liege, pardon; or, at least, let your justice fall where it is due:---but spare my noble, my innocent, patron and master!

AMY. Madam, I do implore, protect me from that shameless villain!

ELIZ. By the soul of the Henrys, this is marvellously strange!---What may this mean?

VAR. An't please your majesty, that lady, my wife---

AMY. No, no, no!

LEIC. Thou false villain!

ELIZ. Nay, my lord, we will, by your leave, stand between this fellow and your wrath.

AMY. Oh, madam, 'tis fa---false;---I shall go mad, if I look longer on that Varney!

ELIZ. Beshrew me, but I think thou art distraught already. My Lord Hunsdon, look to this poor, distressed young woman, and see her bestowed in honest keeping.

(Hunsdon goes round to her, and she exclaims

AMY. My gracious liege, if pity sways your breast, have mercy!---commit me not to ruthless men---keep from me that Varney! Oh, my lords, plead for me---my heart is breaking! Oh, Lei---Le---

(Faints in the arms of Lord Hunsdon, and is borne off.

ELIZ. Now, Varney, speak, and explain these riddles.

LEIC. I'll hear no more; my heart sinks, and be the worst on me, I'll disclose the whole to the Queen---Madam, permit---

VAR. By your leave, my lord:---your majesty's piercing eye has already detected the cruel malady of my beloved lady?

LEIC. Vile monster!

ELIZ. She *is*, then, distraught; but, indeed, we had no doubt of it.---Why had you her not in safe keeping?

VAR. My gracious liege, the worthy gentleman under whose charge I left her, Master Antony Foster, has come hither with me, but now, to shew your majesty of her escape, which she managed with the art peculiar to many who are afflicted with this malady:---He is at hand for your examination.

ELIZ. Let it be another time.---Go, Varney, and care for her with fitting humanity; but let them rid the castle of her, forthwith.

VAR. It shall be done, my liege.

ELIZ. Now, my Lord of Leicester, you are offended with us; and tho' we have a right to be offended with you, we will take upon us the lion's part, and be the first to forgive. (*Gives her hand to Leicester*) Now, lords, let us in!

(*Exeunt all but Varney.*)

VAR. Amy has brought me to the crisis---she, or I, am lost. There was something (I wot not if it was fear or pity) that prompted me to avoid this fatal crisis:---'Tis now decided, and she dies! Now for Lord Leicester. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

A Chamber in Kenilworth Castle.

Enter LEICESTER.

LEIC. I'm quite distracted! it cannot, shall not last! I am married to Amy; what, then, should Elizabeth be to me? Ambition has led me on;---I see, above me, the pinnacle, which I cannot reach; beneath me, the abyss, into which I must fall! I'll first to Amy, then to the Queen, and tell her all.---I am desperate, and care not for the result:---Shame is behind me, ruin before me,---I must on! [*Going.*]

VARNEY enters.

VAR. My lord,---my lord!

LEIC. Ah, monster, is it you?

VAR. Thank heaven, my lord, that I have found you.

LEIC. Thank the devil, whose agent thou art!

VAR. Thank whom you please, my lord; but do you blame me for not betraying the secret, on which your fortunes depend, and which you have so oft' and so earnestly recommended to my safe keeping?---Your lordship was present, in person, and might have contradicted me, and ruined yourself by an avowal of the truth; but it was no part of a faithful servant to do so, without your commands.

LEIC. I cannot deny it---my own ambition has been traitor to my love.

VAR. Say, rather, my lord, that your love has been traitor to your greatness---To make my honourable lady a countess, you have missed the chance of being yourself---

LEIC. Of being myself what?

VAR. Of being thyself king.

LEIC. Thou ravest.

VAR. Ay, and King of England to boot: but, however, something must be done, and that speedily.

LEIC. Right, right; something shall be done! I'll to the Queen, and there disclose the whole;---she may become my enemy, but I still have powerful friends---Knollis, Horsey, Pembroke, Bedford, Warwick, Hopton,---all are bound to me, and do not think a tree so deeply rooted, is easily torn up by the tempest.

VAR. Forgive me, if, in love to you, I see more difficulties than you are aware of.

LEIC. It may be as thou say'st, I care not; but, first I wish to speak with Amy.

VAR. Your lordship will not yourself speak with the lady?

LEIC. It is my fixed purpose.

VAR. (*Aside*) Now, good devil, if there be one, help a poor votary at a pinch: for my boat is among the breakers.---It is come to the point I have long dreaded!--I must either witness, like an ungrateful wretch, the downfall of the best and kindest of masters, or I must speak what I would have buried in the deepest oblivion, or told by any other mouth than mine.

LEIC. What is it thou say'st?

VAR. My speech is soon made,---I would it were as soon answered.---Your marriage with the Countess is the sole cause of the threaten'd breach with the Queen.

LEIC. Thou know'st it is ;---what then ?

VAR. Men will wager their lands and lives in defence of a rich diamond, my lord ; but were it not first prudent to look if there is no flaw in it ?

LEIC. What means this ? Of whom dost thou dare to speak ?

VAR. It is---of the Countess, my lord :---and of whom I *will* speak, though you were to kill me.

LEIC. Perhaps thou may'st deserve it at my hands---but, go on---speak on !

VAR. I do most strongly believe, that since the Queen was first informed of the whole, the Countess has been in connivance with Tresilian.

LEIC. Thou speak'st madness, Varney---how could they communicate together ?

VAR. To my utter astonishment, I lately met him at the postern-gate of Cumnor Place.

LEIC. Thou met'st him there, villain ! and did'st not stab him ?---Well, go on !---what further proof ?

VAR. After effecting her escape from Cumnor Place, and arriving at this castle, the Countess found refuge---I dare not say where.

LEIC. Speak, I command thee ! while I retain sense enough to hear thee.

VAR. Since it must be so---The lady resorted immediately to the apartment of Tresilian, where she remained many hours ; and when I heard that Tresilian had a paramour in his chamber, I little dream't that paramour was-----

LEIC. My wife, thou would'st say :---but, no, no, it is false---false as the smoke of hell ! Ambitious she may be,---fickle, and impatient ;---'tis a woman's fault ; but, false to me ?---never !---The proof---the proof of this ?

VAR. My servant, Michael Lambourne, was passing the chamber, and, hearing strange voices, he entered in---Tresilian immediately rushed on him, and the Countess fled ; but, in seeking to prevent her flight, he obtained one of her gloves, which I think your lordship may know ?

LEIC. I do---I do !---they were my own gift :---I see it all,---'tis written in characters of burning light !---I see her infamy---I see nought else !

VAR. And yet, my lord, so young ;---forgiveness---

LEIC. Speak not for her, Varney---I will have her blood!---She shall die the death of a traitress, and adulteress!---'Talk not to me of forgiveness, Varney---she is doomed.

VAR. Under favour, I should suggest, that she be removed to Cumnor.

LEIC. Order me in what thou wilt---but give me blood---blood, Varney!

VAR. Give me your signet-ring, my lord? and leave all the rest to me.

LEIC. 'Tis here,---here, my good friend. (*Gives Varney the ring*) And now, begone! For this vile woman, I was about to shake the foundation of a lawful throne---to wrong a Queen, who made me what I am.---Begone, I say!---bring me her blood---I will have her blood!---

(*With terrific firmness, as he is going out.*

What thou dost, do quickly. [*Exit.*

VAR. I am sorry for his weakness, but love has made him a child; but this will soon be forgotten, when its object is no more.---When Leicester shall be king, the means by which he came so, will no more trouble his conscience, than the assistance I lent him does mine.---'Tis a pity to wing so pretty a bird; but she is one step too many in the way to the throne. [*Exit.*

Re-enter LEICESTER.

LEIC. And yet, can it be so? Can falsehood use thus boldly the language of truth? Can infamy thus assume the guise of purity? May she not be innocent? Death demands a proof beyond a doubt:---My mind misgives me.---What ho! without, there!---Oh, Amy! guilty, or not, thy misery cannot equal that which I feel.

Enter Servant.

SERV. Call'd you, my lord?

LEIC. Call Richard Varney here.

SERV. E'en now, my lord, he left the Castle.

LEIC. How came he to do so, after the watch was set?

SERV. He gave satisfactory reasons to the guard, and, as I hear, shewed your signet-ring.

LEIC. True, true: yet he has been hasty.---But, do any of his attendants remain behind?

SERV. I saw Michael Lambourne, but now, saddling his horse, to gallop after his master.

LEIC. Bid him hither instantly, and bring me my tablets. [Exit Servant.]

Oh! that cursed slave, Tresilian! That is, indeed, a name to convert tears to blood.---My resolution, there, is fixed; neither entreaty, nor argument, shall move me---Tresilian shall be my victim!

Re-enter Servant, with LAMBOURNE.

SERV. Here, my lord, are your tablets.

(Giving Leicester the tablets, and [Exit.]

LEIC. *(Writes on them)* Deliver this letter, speedily as thy horse can carry thee, into Richard Varney's hands;---it deeply concerns me that it shall be carefully, as well as hastily, executed.

MICH. I will spare neither care nor horseflesh, my lord.

[Exit, with the tablets.]

LEIC. Perhaps I am now fooled by my own generosity, and Tresilian may have escaped, and perhaps go to the rescue of the adultress, who is so poorly guarded. Escape, he never shall, if he ever be found within the length of my sword!

(As he is going, he meets

TRESILIAN, *muffled up.*

TRES. I desire some conference with you?

LEIC. Who are you, and what do you want?

TRES. I am *(unmuffling)* Tresilian, and demand justice.

LEIC. Justice, all men are entitled to---you, sir, are peculiarly so, and be assured you shall have it.

TRES. I expect nothing else from your nobleness.---I have to request an account from your lordship of the unhappy Amy Robsart, whose history is too well known to you.---Trusting to the effect of her own remonstrances upon her unworthy husband, she extorted from me a promise not to interfere in her behalf for twelve hours---that time is now past, and I first address myself to you.

LEIC. Ah! remember you to whom you speak?

TRES. I speak of her unworthy husband, and my respect can find no softer language.

LEIC. I have heard you, Master Tresilian, without interruption, and I bless Heaven, that my ears were never before made to tingle by the words of so frontless a villain!--The task of chastising you is fitter for the hangman's scourge, than the sword of a nobleman---yet, Draw, villain, and defend thyself!

[Strikes Tresilian.—They both draw.]

TRES. My lord, as I have been known to many, as one who does not fear death, when placed in balance with honour, methinks I may ask, without derogation, wherefore your lordship has dared to offer me such a mark of disgrace?

LEIC. If you like not such marks of my scorn, be-take yourself instantly to your weapon, lest I repeat the usage you complain of.

TRES. It shall not need, my lord:---Heaven judge betwixt us, and your blood, if you fall, be on your own head.

(They fight, and Leicester disarms Tresilian; he places his foot on his breast, and says)

LEIC. Confess thy villainous wrongs to me, and prepare for death!

TRES. I have no villainy, nor wrongs, towards you to confess, and have given you no cause for this.

LEIC. No cause! no cause!--But, why parley with such a slave?---Die, a liar, as thou hast lived!

(As he is about to kill him,

A Servant hastily enters, with a letter.)

SERV. My lord, a person has been anxiously seeking you the whole of the day, and craves your instant attention to the contents of this letter.

LEIC. Ha!--

(As Leicester reads the letter, Tresilian rises, and regains his sword.)

'Tis from Amy!--Tresilian! Tresilian! pierce my heart, as I would, e'en now, have pierced thine.---The villains!--But, oh! that worst of villains, Varney!--And she is, even now, in his power!

TRES. But not, I trust, with any commands of fatal import?

LEIC. I said something in madness, but it was recalled, by a hasty messenger.---She is, she must be, now safe!

TRES. Yes, she must be safe, and I must be assured of her safety.---My own quarrel with you, my lord, is ended---but there is another to begin, with the seducer of Amy Robsart.

LEIC. The seducer of Amy!--say, her husband, her misguided, blinded, most unworthy husband!--Think, think for me, how to save her---I'll give thee rank, my coronet, my heart, my heart's blood, to save her's! Fly, this instant---my wife! my wife!--fly---follow---fly!--fly---to Cumnor!

(Rushes off, followed by Tresilian and Servant.)

SCENE THE LAST.

Open Chamber in Cumnor Hall, with Practicable Staircase to Drawing.

Enter ANTONY FOSTER, and VARNEY.

ANT. Her strength is well-nigh exhausted by this journey; she must rest; that alone will restore her.

VAR. "Rest alone will restore her,"---she shall soon sleep sound, and long!--We must consider how to lodge her in safety.

ANT. In her own apartment, to be sure.

VAR. We will not trust that, friend Tony; we must secure her in a stronger hold;---in one word, thy chamber, at the end of the gallery, yonder, which thou hast fenced so curiously, must be her place of seclusion.---

But, soft---I see her coming : I will retire under a part of this staircase, while you conduct her to this chamber.

(Retires, softly, under the stairs.

The COUNTESS enters.

AMY. Where is Janet, Master Foster? I would retire to rest.

ANT. My daughter is dear to me, madam, and I desire not that she should get the Court tricks, of lying, and 'scaping---and somewhat too much of this she has learnt, an' it please your ladyship :---Yet, 'tis but right you have your rest ; but, under favour, you go not to your gew-gaw toy-house again ;---you will sleep, to-night, in better security.---Your lord will soon be here, and you will, doubtless, make your own ways good with him.

AMY. Does he, indeed, come hither, good Foster?---How gladly will I, then, to rest.

ANT. But, will you take no refreshment?

AMY. Oh, no, no---my chamber :---Alas ! 'tis a frightful place to look on---But, I trust I may secure it on the inside?

ANT. With all my heart, so I may secure it on the outside.---This way, my lady.

(Music.—Foster takes a lamp from table, and, preceding the Countess, they ascend the staircase.—Varney comes out, watching their motions, and is seen examining the wall, and the supports reaching to the top of the gallery, when

FOSTER comes down.

VAR. Good Foster, I pray thee, tell me, of what nature is yonder machinery, so curiously attached to the gallery above?

ANT. Those supports are attached, by rope-sliders, concealed in the wall, and hold up a trap, somewhat like a draw-bridge, which, being let down, cuts off all

communication between the landing-place of the stairs, and the room into which I have just shewn the Countess.

VAR. And is the abyss below of any depth, when the trap is let down?

ANT. 'Tis deep enough, indeed, and is well nigh to the lowest vault in the Castle;---but, what of that?

VAR. Thou wilt esteem her, perhaps, too delicate a morsel for the fiend's tooth?

ANT. Varney! and must that, then, be done? I always foresaw it would end there; but, not to win the world's wealth, would I lay hands of violence on her!

VAR. I cannot blame thee --- neither will I. ---We miss, now, the dog, Lambourne.

ANT. Why, where tarries Lambourne?

VAR. That's difficult to answer. He overtook me, on the road, with my lord's countermand of the signet; but, as my lord wrote it alone with Mike, I thought a dead witness could do no harm; so, I shot him, and then rifled his pockets, that they might think it was done by robbers.

ANT. Oh, Varney, where will this end?

VAR. Tush! tush! never fear.---But, to our graver matters. Yonder trap-door, Tony,---will it remain secure in appearance, though the supports are withdrawn beneath?

ANT. Aye, so long as it is not trodden on.

VAR. But, were the lady to attempt an escape over it, her weight would bear it down?

ANT. A mouse's weight would bear it down.

VAR. Why, then, she dies, in attempting *her own escape!* and how could you or I help it, honest Tony? It now wants but half an hour of midnight: As soon as the clock shall strike twelve, the supports to the machinery must be withdrawn.

ANT. And who is to do this?

VAR. You.

ANT. At twelve, then, that trap is to fall, and the Countess is to be plunged into this abyss?

(In agitation and irresolution for some time, then, as if a sudden thought came o'er him, he says, with decision,

---At twelve, then, I will do it.

VAR. Enough: I now go to visit our little captive. She shall have full liberty to come out of her chamber at twelve; till then, it must not be touched.

ANT. And, till twelve, if occasion require, you may pass, and repass, in safety.

VAR. Thanks, good Foster.---Now, Amy, the hour of revenge is come: tremble at it. *[Music.*

(Varney ascends the staircase, and, as he enters the Countess's chamber, he says,

“Foster, remember the hour---’tis twelve.”

(During this time, Foster becomes dreadfully agitated, and, at length, says,

ANT. I feel a kind of dizziness---my head swims---the blood is in my throat, and something is pulling at my heart:---my eyes are all fire,---oh, for a tear to quench them! *(He glares wildly round for some time, then bursts into a flood of tears.)* I am better now,---’tis lighter here! *(touching his heart)* Yes, yes, I will let down the trap;---time, time, thou art too slow for me!---At twelve: and why not now?---It shall be so.

(Music.—He lets down the supporters.

There: ’tis done.---But not for her---nothing shall harm her;---it is for him.---Varney shall die; the Countess shall be saved; my daughter shall bless me, and here---here---Oh! I am quite easy here! *(touching his breast, and forehead.)* But, now the trap’s loose, how shall I get Varney into the snare?---Ah! I have it:---the earl’s well-known whistle---that will bring Varney from the chamber; I’ll go and imitate it’s sound, in the courtyard.

(As he is going out, Leicester is heard.

LEIC. *(Without)* Where is my wife?

ANT. Ah! ’tis my lord’s voice!

LEIC. What ho! Lambourne---Varney---Foster!

Entering, he sees Foster, and says,

Ah, villain! where is my wife?

ANT. She is safe---she is safe!---I am innocent!

TRES. ’Tis false!---I’ll not believe it.

LEIC. Nor I---Where is she?---My wife! it is thy lord, thy Leicester calls.

AMY. *(Within)* Ah!

(Screams.

LEIC. Ah! she is there!---I fly to rescue thee!

(As he is rushing up stairs, Foster runs to him.

ANT. Hold ! hold, for mercy ! Have a care---Death is beneath your feet !

LEIC. Detested wretch, I care not ! Varney, come forth !---My wife !

(As he continues running up, Varney appears at the door of the chamber, and says,

VAR. Advance not ! I am armed !

LEIC. Ah ! villain !

VAR. *(Seeing that he does not stop)* Nay, then, thus I rush on thee, and destroy thee and thy hopes for ever !

(As Leicester nearly reaches the top of the stairs, Varney runs towards him, the trap gives way, and he is hurled down.—The Countess is seen at the door of her chamber.—Tresilian is on another part of the stairs, and Janet rushes into her father's arms.—Servants, &c. fill up the tableau.

THE CURTAIN DROPS.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 385 612 4

